

4-17-2017

## Panther Press, April 17, 2017

Florida International University

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### Recommended Citation

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## HEAR ME ROAR



JOSEPH GOMEZ / PANTHER PRESS

Ali Qureshi, mechanical engineering student, attends the Uproar concert and enjoys the giveaways at the FIU Arena on Wednesday, April 12, 2017.

## Miami Urban Initiative receives \$1.2 million from Knight Foundation

TAPKANNIA KEOUN  
Staff Writer

FIU's College of Communication, Architecture and the Arts, in a partnership with the Creative Class Group, will head a project that will establish Miami as a leading economic metropolis.

The project, titled "The Miami Urban Future Initiative," is keen on researching former and current economic trends in the region, and developing new strategies to put Miami on the map as a globally creative economy.

"The initiative will help map economic, occupational and technological aspects in the region. We'll bring in partners and experts in addition to our team to provide the necessary data to grow a more inclusive economy," said Rana Florida, CEO of the Creative Class Group.

The Creative Class Group is an advisory firm that works with companies and businesses which studies the correlation between cities and economic growth. The group was founded by Florida's husband, Richard, an author and professor of urban economic theory.

"[We] disseminate this information and inform the broad strategic vision for the region's private and public stakeholders through ongoing local convenings and briefs," said FIU's dean of the College of Communication, Architecture, and the Arts, Brian Schriener.

The project is an extension

of an existing venture between FIU-CARTA and the Creative Class Group, the Miami Creative City Initiative, which looks at advancing economic benefits accumulated in Miami in the past two decades.

"We've been working in the Miami region with Florida International University for the past three years. They are top notch in creating the next level of talent that's going to really grow the region and we thought there was a need to continue this type of work," Florida said to Student Media.

Recently, the initiative received \$1.2 million in funding from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation to resume this economic research.

"Improved intelligence and research guide Miami's strategic direction – there will be four to six annual briefings and publications. Any future economic and community development in the region must be guided by data and facts about the region, such as trends and regional strengths and weaknesses," said Schriener.

The future of the initiative places importance on bringing together international thought leaders and regional practitioners, to catapult Miami as an urban center for economic development and creativity.

The Miami Urban Future Initiative will be located at the newly developed FIU-CARTA at Mana Wynwood on the eastside. The initiative is projected to begin in September and will be in place through 2022.

### BISCAYNE BAY

## MPAS to host release week

DOUGLASS GAVILAN  
Staff Writer

Beginning Monday, April 17, the Multicultural Programs and Services and Campus Life offices will be hosting a week-long event that incorporates relaxation and issues affecting the LGBTQA community.

As Pride Month continues, "Release Week" will have five events including a day of silence, which is an annual nationwide event to spread awareness on the effects of bullying and harassment many members of the LGBTQA communities often face.

"Release week is a cool opportunity in which LGBTQA initiatives partners with Campus Life," said Sebastian Ojeda, graduate assistant for the LGBTQA initiatives.

Students who take the pledge, which will be at 10 a.m in the Panther Square, will be given a shirt and expected to stay silent until the event wraps up.

After, students will return and take part in an ice cream social where student discuss what they noticed from taking the pledge.

"Typically, this has been happening around high schools and colleges around the U.S.," said Ojeda. "People can commit to taking a vow of silence. They are given an informational card that they can hand to people. The card explains what is the event and why they are participating in the event."

National Day of Silence is a student-led day meant to fight bullying and harassment and was first organized in 1996 by a group of students at the University of Virginia, according to the Gay Straight Advocates for Education organization.

Campus Life and the Multicultural Programs and Services will team up again for "Pride BBQ," which follows on Tuesday, April 18. It will take place in Panther Square and last between 11 a.m.

**SEE RELEASE, PAGE 2**

## SGA's elected candidates share their plans for new term

CEYLIN ARIAS  
Staff Writer

Election season at the University officially concluded on April 5, results confirmed FIYou candidates at MMC President-elect Krista Schmidt and Vice President-elect Jordan Thompson, and President-elect Leonardo Cosio and Vice President Meredith Marseille at BBC as winners of this year's student government election.

Though Cosio and Marseille both ran uncontested, this did not make winning the election at BBC any less important or exciting, said Cosio.

"The feelings Krista might have felt when she found out she won the election must have been different from what I felt when I found out,

but the core of it, it remains the same. There is a lot of work to be done," he said.

Cosio said he could not share many of the details about his platform as he has not officially begun his term as president -- which will be in May-- he has a few plans to reduce transportation costs for students.

"We want students to know that we are here for them. In fact, one of the things that we will be addressing is the bus shuttle fee. Five dollars per bus ride gets expensive and so the SGC-BBC will find a way to cut costs," said Cosio.

Cosio also said SGC-BBC work for students and want students to know their concerns will be addressed and fixed. MMC president-elect Schmidt echoed the same sentiment.

"My vision as a student government organization [representative] is to be visual

on campus. SGC has that potential and empowerment and once we start doing that, people will see that SGC can create positive change for the entire student body," said Schmidt.

Schmidt says that after joining SGA, students tend to form their own bubble and lose touch with what's going on outside of that. During the year she took a break from SGC, Schmidt says she was still engaged with students and organizations involved with SGC.

"I felt that this perspective is what is really needed this upcoming year in student government. When they asked me to run at SGA back in December, although I didn't necessarily see myself doing this in prior years, I realized I could make that change myself," said Schmidt. "I have already been around students throughout all the organizations I have been a part of so I

understand how crucial it is to address students' concerns."

Schmidt said to Student Media that she has been working with student government ever since her freshman year as a lower-division senator.

"I actually ran with Alian at the FIYou party and that's where my roots all started because that was my first involvement on campus. Throughout my academic career at the University, one of the organizations I have been a part of was the Lead team and it completely changed my life," said Schmidt. "It taught me how to be there for other people and what it meant to be a leader. Employers nowadays want to hire leaders, not followers. It gave me confidence and helped

**SEE SGA, PAGE 6**

## NATION & WORLD BRIEFS

### Afghanistan says 36 militants killed after US drops ‘mother of all bombs’ against Islamic State

PANDOLA, Afghanistan — A day after the United States dropped the largest non-nuclear weapon it has ever used in combat, U.S. military helicopters pounded a mountainside village in eastern Afghanistan on Friday in an ongoing operation against fighters loyal to the Islamic State.

Plumes of smoke were visible from several miles away as the airstrikes provided cover for Afghan commandos and U.S. advisers who have been locked in a two-week battle to clear a network of tunnels used by Islamic State militants — the target of the Thursday bombing.

### Assad faces international pressure to step down, but in Damascus there is a mood of defiance

DAMASCUS, Syria — From his shop window, looking out on the storied Umayyad mosque and the remains of a 2,000-year-old Roman bath complex, Joseph Havera was contemplating what he considered a nightmare scenario: a U.S.-led assault on the Syrian capital, stronghold of President Bashar Assad.

“Why would the United States attack Syria? I don’t understand it,” Havera, an august merchant of textiles, antiquities and other Syrian handicrafts, said from his musty second-floor aerie, up a series of narrow stairways that wind past sundry craftsmen’s workshops.

### French election’s only sure thing is gridlock in Parliament

PARIS — Every French presidential election back to 1981 has been followed by the winner’s party going on to take control of Parliament. Chances are high it won’t happen this time.

The two front-runners for the voting that begins April 23, Emmanuel Macron and Marine Le Pen, head non-establishment political movements that are unlikely to get majorities in the legislative elections that follow in June. Should either become France’s president, they’d be forced to seek uncomfortable alliances with rivals, or risk five years of limbo.

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

# Organization brings prison reform awareness to University

STEPHANIE CASTRO  
Assistant News Director

The Student Alliance for Prison Reform is an established national network of students who support initiatives to bring out change in the criminal justice system via advocacy, education and service.

Eric Feldman, advisor for SAPR, said the club started fall of 2016 after he attended a civic engagement conference in colleges.

“In one of the presentations I went

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Statistically, the rate of going to prison is so high that if you have not directly been involved with the judicial system, you know at least one person in your family or a friend of a friend who has. We’re the number one country in the world to incarcerate people,

Elimelech Risse  
President

FIU Student Alliance for Police Reform

”

to, there was somebody who tried to get colleges to work on prison reform — to teach classes in prisons or to have formerly incarcerated students tell stories on campus and humanize them,” said Feldman.

The United States is the world’s leader in incarceration with 2.2 million people currently in the nation’s prisons and jails — a 500 percent increase over the last 40 years, according to The Sentencing Project.

Featured in the Huffington Post, USA Today, The Hill, the student-run

club’s main goal is to further prison education, raise awareness on campus and work together with other SAPR chapters to influence both national and state policy.

As a global medallion student, SAPR’s FIU President Elimelech Risse first got involved when she attended a seminar with a panel of speakers addressing mass incarceration and rehabilitating inmates.

A few weeks later, Feldman sent out an email about starting a new club at the University in line with the national organization.

“I was the first one in line. I couldn’t say no to something like that because this impacts us all,” said Risse.

SAPR works with outside organizations such as Silent Victims of Crime, Ladies Empowerment and Action Program, Dr. Regina B Shearn Corrections Transition Program, LEAP Workshop, Eradicating the School to Prison Pipeline, Alternatives to Violence Project, among others.

“Statistically, the rate of going to prison is so high that if you have not directly been involved with the judicial system, you know at least one person in your family or a friend of a friend who has,” said Risse. “We’re the number one country in the world to incarcerate people.”

Risse’s main goal is to bring more awareness and involvement to the club.

“The mission is to advocate social issues. As president, one of the things that I would like to emphasize on members is the state of mind. In that, it’s great to be involved, but let’s be proactive members of society,” said Risse. “We are more than a club, we are a movement.”

Among their various events, SAPR has also collaborated with the Miami Gardens police department in the Walking One Stop event,

a Miami-Dade County Juvenile Services Department initiative which is a part of the Miami-Dade Anti-Gang Strategy, created in 2008.

The event allows residents access to social and economic services, child care, as well as youth services and disability services.

“When people get incarcerated it’s not just the person going into prison, it’s the whole family that gets affected,” said Risse. “The event [Walking One Stop] showed us that.”

Risse would also like to open an office at the University in an effort to get more departments involved with SAPR such as the Psychology Department.

“They [inmates] go in and go out and they’re never the same. There’s a bunch of different offices in FIU, why not create a mental health office?” said Risse. “Why not give students a job or an internship?”

Feldman also tackled on the issue of the restoration of voting rights in Florida where convicted felons are not allowed to vote for the rest of their lives.

“People’s misconception [on returning citizens] are that everyone had a real choice about whatever they did to get to prison. That everyone has total self-control over their lives while I think you have very limited choices depending on their surroundings,” said Feldman.

On April 27, SAPR will be celebrating their first year as an organization at the University at the Green Library in room 137 at 6:30 p.m. All FIU students are welcomed.

For more information on FIU’s SAPR organization, visit their facebook page at Student Alliance for Prison Reform at FIU.

Additional reporting done by Martina Bretous.

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## MPAS hosts week-long event on LGBTQA issues and relaxation

### RELEASE, PAGE 1

and 2 p.m., according to Hannah Ellis, graduate assistant at BBC’s Campus Life.

“They [MPAS] are so wonderful, they are a wonderful office and I’m so proud to work with them,” said Ellis. “I’m so excited to be working with them. We’re both trying to do a lot to benefit students.”

The next three days will focus on relieving students stress where events will be done with an outer space theme — the first is Art Therapy Day.

On Wednesday, April 19, students will enjoy arts and craft activities working with moon sand and creating their own rocket ship. There will also be a photobooth for students and graduating seniors can customize teddy bears from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. in the Panther Square.

“Some of the research that I have seen is that different students handle stress in different ways,” said Ellis. “Students do best when they are given a creative outlet, and art is one of the biggest.

Whether it’s painting, crafting or using Playdough, using art is a way to let them focus on a small project versus having their brain scattered over homework, family and stress.”

“Throw Your Stress Away” follows on Thursday, April 20, which Ellis said will feature a black hole where students can write what is stressing them out on paper stars and can throw it away in the black hole. Campus Life will also be giving away cupcakes to participating students in Wolfe University Center Loggia, from 11 a.m. til 2 p.m.

On the last day of Release Week, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. “Sweat the Stress Away” will consist of playgrounds activities and games. Ellis said there will be jump rope, foursquare, dodgeball and chalk.

“This is the event that I’m most excited about,” said Ellis. “It’s a way to get students active, outside and take their stress away.”

For more information, visit Campus life located in WUC 141 at the Biscayne Bay Campus or the MPAS offices located in WUC 253.

## Syria “in the wrong,” but we must be careful

### DEBRIEFING



DANIEL MELO

President Donald Trump ordered a military attack on Syria for violating regulations from the Chemical Weapons Convention on Thursday, April 6.

Syria used chemical warfare on their own citizens, claiming the lives of 85 people — including approximately 24 children and wounding about 350 more.

If this wasn't enough, Assad activists proceeded to bomb

the medical facilities where the wounded were receiving medical care. One thing is clear in this: Syria is in the wrong.

But is the United States entitled to interfere with aggressive measures when the decisions of a foreign and sovereign state doesn't affect us at home?

John Locke claims that a war or an attack could solely be perceived as ‘just’ if performed with the intention of defending oneself from an aggressor.

Many believe that this also extends to defending the weak and the helpless — and this is exactly what the U.S. did on Thursday night.

Syria has been in a civil war since 2011, and the U.S. has only

targeted a specific Syrian air base with periodic cruise missiles

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The fact that [the U.S. and Russia] could potentially escalate this situation is dreadful to think about.

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— the number of casualties is unclaimed — however, for the first time since the ongoing civil war began, the United States bombed a significant regime target.

This is a change in the

Trump regime, which originally campaigned itself on an ‘America first’ approach.

However, this change signals a humanitarian stance on international affairs, attempting to protect those who can't protect themselves. But ultimately, was this worth it?

The Assad regime has been receiving military support from Russia, and after the attack on Thursday, Russia was quick to speak up.

According to Fox News, Russian President Vladimir Putin described the attack as “an act of aggression on a sovereign state” that “dealt a serious blow to Russia-U.S. relations.”

Russia is a significant world power that currently outnumbers

us in nuclear weapons possessed. According to Business Insider, Russia has a total of 1,790 nuclear weapons that are deployed and ready to use whilst the U.S. has 1,740.

Russia's number isn't significantly larger, but the fact that these two superpowers could potentially escalate this situation is dreadful to think about.

For all that it's worth, it's better to keep the peace and seek diplomatic agreements than risk a potential Russian retaliation on U.S. troops or American soil.

*Daniel Melo is a contributing writer for Panther Press. His column, Debriefing, is a commentary on politics.*

## Blackness is not an economic status

### A IS FOR ANTI



AKILAH DAVIS

It seems as if each article I write goes on to inspire my next, but inspiration does what it wants. I recently read a column in the Miami Herald written by entrepreneur Brian Brackeen, in which he expressed his “blackness” or “lack thereof.”

He wrote that he had a lost an editorial opportunity because he didn't have the background or upbringing the media loves to glorify and highlight about black folk — the one that speaks of immense struggle and hardship.

Because of this, Inc. Magazine, an editorial initially willing to profile him, killed his story and his spread because they claimed he wasn't “black enough,” as if there was a such thing. He had come from a stable, middle-class family.

According to his column, 75 percent of black people aren't poor. Seventy-five percent of black people grow up in stable homes, like myself here in Fort Lauderdale, and Brackeen, who grew up in Philadelphia. But our 75 percent takes a back seat to the 25 percent of us who do, unfortunately, experience hardship, and instability in childhood homes.

Why not represent our demographic accurately, if not

equally, at all. How does having a background of drugs, abuse, alcohol, legal troubles and the like make you more black than that of stability, education, and safety? Why does circumstance define how black you are.

There are so many obstacles thrown in the path of the black individual. Besides not being treated equally amongst society, we must also face stigmas within our own community.

There is this constant notion to highlight the smaller portion of those that fail to represent us at height of our culture and potential. Instead, we are portrayed as troublesome “overcomers.”

It's not fair to say a man isn't “black enough” because he owned his truth or was able to become successful and make a way for himself beyond trying to “make it out.”

T is for truth — as in tell all of it; even a portion of the truth is still a lie. We black people are way more than the media makes us out to be. Of course we can exceed, overcome and go beyond such trepidations.

But whether we face them or not, our culture is superior to gangsters, drug dealers, felons, and addicts. We are superhuman. We can do anything. Including succeed with success being the only incentive.

*Akilah Davis is a staff writer for Panther Press. Her column, A is For Anti, provides oppositional commentary on the social and societal influences in America.*

## Stay healthy and shop organic

### EYES ON THE EARTH



AMANDA JUNG

You have probably heard once or twice in your life that it's important to eat purely organic food. And a few people might have mentioned that although it may cost a few bucks more, it's definitely worth it in the long run.

But I am here to investigate whether or not organic is worth all the hype. It's important to know, not only for human beings and for our health, but for the environment and for the sustainability of Planet Earth.

According to The Balance, there are countless benefits when it comes to organic farming and eating. To begin with, it discourages the exposure to pesticides and chemicals. This is something we have probably all heard before.

Every time you go to the grocery store, you pass countless fruits and vegetables, and there are usually some that are labeled organic and others that aren't.

Maybe you're one of the people who avoid the organic foods simply because they're a bit more expensive than the regular fruits and vegetables.

But maybe you hopped on the bandwagon of those who think spending a few extra dollars for some pesticide free produce is worth it.

The Balance made it clear that organic farming is something that's extremely positive for the environment

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It's clear that organic farming is something that's extremely positive for the environment because it combats the effects of global warming.

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because it combats the effects of global warming.

According to The Balance, a “trial, running since 1981, has shown that a healthy organic agriculture system can actually reduce carbon dioxide and help slow climate change.”

On top of that, it's also something that supports water conservation and animal welfare.

So with the long list of pros that organic farming and eating has presented us with, why isn't everyone eating an organic diet?

According to Scientific American, “organic agriculture delivers just 5 percent less

yield in rain-watered legume crops, such as alfalfa or beans, and in perennial crops, such as fruit trees.

But when it comes to major cereal crops such as corn or wheat, and vegetables, such as broccoli, conventional methods delivered more than 25 percent more yield.”

The first problem is that organic farming doesn't produce as much crops as traditional farming. But it gets even more complicated.

Not only do farmers need to have the knowledge on how to grow organic crops properly, but they “must learn to manage an entire ecosystem geared to producing food — controlling pests through biological means, using the waste from animals to fertilize fields and even growing one crop amidst another.”

Personally, I am not someone who goes out of my way to purchase organic food. With time though, I have realized how important it is to eat a clean diet and that means eating food that is not covered in chemicals and pesticides.

I think it's important to shop organic when possible. Not only is it beneficial for the environment, but for our health as well.

*Amanda Jung is a staff writer for Panther Press. Her column, Eyes on the Earth, is a commentary on current global environmental issues.*

### SEND US YOUR LETTERS

Have something on your mind? Send an email to [opinion@fiusm.com](mailto:opinion@fiusm.com). Be sure to include your name, major and year and a photo of yourself. Letters must be less than 400 words and may be edited for clarity and length. Panther Press will only run two letters a semester from any individual.

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## POSNER 'COOLER THAN' HEATON

### SPC's UpRoar event takes an unexpected turn for the best

MARTHA MY DEAR



MARTHA PEREZ-MENDEZ

As April 12 rolled around there was little anticipation around campus for the annual UpRoar event held by FIU's Student Programming Council.

Previous years have seen the likes of Jessie J, MKTO, T-Pain, Big Sean, Gym Class Heros and more.

This year welcomed rising star Niykee Heaton and on again off again sensation Mike Posner to the stage.

While doing my research on UpRoar, I was ready for the kind of packed audience prior years have seen. However, as I stood at the front railing with ample room and the show about to start, I began to realize that this small crowd would not grow much larger.

Before attending the concert, I first took a listen to Heaton's Spotify and YouTube channel. Though her roots in pop and alternative R&B remain, her music has changed from the robust, acoustic sound heard on her YouTube channel to a more whiney and altered voice on her tracks which lack the soul she once demonstrated.

Fast forward to UpRoar and my



JOSEPH GOMEZ/PANTHER PRESS

Students dance at "Glow Jam," an SPC event leading up to the Uproar concert on Tuesday, April 11.

expectations for an underwhelming performance were met.

As she began to sing her first song, I started to hear people questioning the same thing I was: is she lip-syncing through this whole performance? It was hard to tell at first, but it became obvious that she was barely singing over her previously recorded vocals.

She continued to lip-sync until she referenced her humble beginnings by performing a cover. Her hustled rap matched with strings of R&B vocals that really elevated her performance.

Still, her low energy combined with sporadic and provocative dance moves resulted in an awkward opening act. The audience was visibly anxious for Posner's set to begin as soon as she announced her last song.

As we waited for his performance, students nostalgia over "Cooler Than Me" was almost as talked about as their love for Posner's more recent hit "I Took a Pill in Ibiza."

Creating these catchy pop-rap songs intended for the college crowd has left Posner struggling with most of his recognition surfacing from these one-hit albums. Having also connected him to this "poppy" and predictable sound, I was excited but didn't expect any surprises.

Most of the audience and I were thrown for a whirl when Posner joined The Legendary Mike Posner Band in performing his hits in various expressions. They dipped into different genres to change up songs the crowd was expecting to hear replicated from his albums.

From edgier guitar and drum sounds laid down by Jacob Scesney to slowed down intimate acoustic moments, Posner and the

band brought us a new appreciation for his so called "one hit wonders".

followed. This time he took a seat at the front of the stage and began to talk.



MARTHA PEREZ-MENDEZ/PANTHER PRESS

Mike Posner performs Wednesday April 12 at SPC UpRoar concert.

Posner also blessed the audience with rock/alternative rearrangements of covers, such as "Black Beatles" by Rae Sremmurd, in his innovative efforts to pump up the crowd.

He also covered Justin Bieber's "If I Was Your Boyfriend" with the original lyrics he wrote stylishly interrupted by soul wrenching saxophone and drum solos.

If this wasn't enough to turn anyone permanently into a Mike Posner fan, the young multi-talented artist had one more surprise. After ending the set with "I Took a Pill in Ibiza" and leaving the stage, the room was overpowered by the small audience's screams for an encore.

The band shortly reappeared and Posner

Not fully knowing what was going on, the audience was intrigued. He continued in reciting a poem of gratitude memorized from his recently published book of poetry.

This moment of reflection left him vulnerable and emotionally expressive. Never before has a performance made me feel so personally connected to the artist. Furthermore, his relatable battles connected the audience to each other.

Ending the show with this strong moment of community made everyone in attendance equally as grateful to have chosen to be there that night. No matter how anyone felt about Niykee Heaton's performance, Mike Posner and his band made UpRoar a worthwhile event.

## Women and gender studies offers trans studies course

CAYLA BUSH  
Editor-in-Chief

The Center for Women's and Gender Studies will offer a new course in the fall focusing on the transgender experience.

Following the lead of other universities, the course is the first step for what the Director of the Center, Yesim Darici, hopes to evolve into a transgender studies initiative.

"We have 55,000 students, and this is the right place to do it. Of course, all these things come with the demand from students," Darici told Student Media. "I saw a need and I initiated it and [Justin Grant] wanted to do it, so I said let's do it."

Grant, who is an instructor in the English department, says that the introduction to trans studies course was developed to offer a space that shows the lives of a group of students on campus.

"The course reflects the lives and experiences of transgender students here at FIU, which we don't currently have a course or curriculum for this field of study," Grant said to Student Media. "Thinking about the timeliness, we're seeing this sort of cultural phenomenon where there's this greater visibility of transgender individuals."

Grant says that shows like Amazon's "Transparent," and former president Barack Obama's State of the Union

Address brings visibility to the transgender community, but not all of the hardships that face its members.

"We see poverty, harassment, discrimination and violence against transgender people, particularly against trans women of color. So this dichotomy between visibility and vulnerability in the community is something that needs to be fully addressed," Grant said.

The course, according to Grant and Darici, will be an interdisciplinary approach to understanding topics such as trans activism, feminism and queer approaches to transgender issues and transgender film and literature.

"The course is not only exposing students to transgender issues and perspectives, but also gives students a broader understanding about their own subjectivities and to think about those relationships between sex, gender and intersexuality," Grant said.

While the undergraduate course is only being offered as a special topics course right now, Grant and Darici hope that an increased demand from students will lead to the course standing on its own. They say that plans to develop a graduate course would follow in a couple of years if there is a demand for it.

"If students want more on the subject, they come and say 'we need these initiatives, we don't have any.' Then I will sit with students and related faculty, and we will discuss what their needs are and what they want," Darici said. "If a demand comes from the student body, it is real and it has to be answered."

## Cox finds 'identity'

MANIC MONDAY



HAROLD LOPEZ

Laverne Cox removed her prison uniform and strutted the halls of Panther Territory this past Tuesday, April 11.

Cox visited the University as the guest speaker for SGC-BBC's Lecture Series as part of her "Ain't I a Woman: My Journey Through Womanhood" tour.

"She has a really powerful message. Not only is her message really strong for people in the LGBTQ community, but her message of acceptance, being yourself and being content with you can help students grow," said Jamie Adelson, SGA-BBC director of lectures.

The Lecture Series occurs at least once each academic year and has had guests such as Tia Mowry, Candy Crowley and Mayim Bialik to name a few.

"We create a survey with different people that the lecture's committee and I choose. We

distribute the survey to the students and keep looking at the results. I go to my director and we see how that person's schedule works with ours, because we have a representative with Kepler," said Adelson.

The Wolfe University Center at FIU had over 200 students and community members anticipating the arrival of the queen of breaking barriers.

Adelson opened the event with a brief introduction on the actress and activist.

Cox had her breakthrough performance as Sophia Buset on the Netflix television series "Orange Is the New Black." She has earned a nomination for a Primetime Emmy Award for the role as the first openly transgender person.

"If you are a transgender person in America, you are part of a group that is deeply shamed, stigmatized, criminalized, objectified, treated as if your identity does not exist," said Cox at the event.

She spoke about her evolution and about how it was like being

SEE LAVERNE, PAGE 6

# Events offer students opportunity to relieve ‘craziness and stress that adulting entails’

**JOSHUA CEBALLOS**

*Assistant Entertainment Director*

The Office of Multicultural Programs and Services, Campus Life BBC, the Wellness and Recreation Center and the Healthy Living Program are all hosting events to help students unwind before a week of testing.

## “Feed Your Mind”

MPAS will be hosting its “Feed Your Mind” workshop in the Wolfe University Center at the Biscayne Bay Campus in room 253 on April 18.

“The purpose of this event is to let students know about some of the healthy snacks they can eat to stimulate their brain and include a healthier lifestyle,” said Mark Harris, a graduate assistant for MPAS.

Harris says that students may have a fairly good idea about nutrition and how to eat to maintain their bodies, but in the scramble of finals week, all that nutritional know-how goes away.

“... taking into consideration that this is around finals time, we’re just trying to make students a little bit more aware of this so that once they’re in a rush taking finals, writing papers, [they’ll know about] some foods or some snacks that they can munch on just to help them stay focused with their academics,” said Harris.

Students attending the event will be treated to healthy snacks provided by MPAS to coincide with their presentation which Harris says is more than just a lecture.

“We try to have... a lecture-conversation style when it comes to our events. We don’t want the students to feel like we’re lecturing them all the time, but we also want them to engage in conversation as well,” said Harris.

## “Art Therapy Day”

On April 19, Campus Life at BBC will be hosting its semesterly “Art Therapy Day” event as a part of “Release Week” before finals.

Hannah Ellis, graduate assistant for Campus Life, says that this event will be a chance for students to reconnect with their inner child.

“... it’s basically a way for students go out and forget about finals and the stress that they’re going to be encountering... and we would like to take them back to their childhood classrooms and let them paint,” said Ellis.

Release Week is a general effort to diffuse stress for students at BBC according to Ellis and Art Therapy Day does that in a creative fashion that most students don’t normally get to enjoy.

“I used to teach preschool and I got to see how art therapy really did help our

students, and as I’ve gotten to work with college students, I’ve realized that they don’t get to do that as much. They don’t get to engage in as much play with all the craziness and stress that adulting entails,” said Ellis.

Craft tables will be set up in Panther Square at BBC where Ellis said that

“

I used to teach preschool and I got to see how art therapy really did help our students, and as I’ve gotten to work with college students... [I’ve learned] they don’t get to engage in as much play with all the craziness and stress that adulting entails

Hannah Ellis  
Graduate Assistant  
Campus Life

”

students will be able to create their own flags alongside MPAS, as well as enjoy crafting personal rocketships that go along with the week’s outer space theme.

## “Yogurt and Yoga”

For students looking for a more physical release for stress, the WRC will host a “Yogurt and Yoga” event for students to work out the woes of finals.

The coordinator of fitness and programming for the WRC, Sara Holtzman, says that this is an opportunity for people in the community to feed both their bodies and minds when they normally don’t have the chance to.

“This will be our second year with the event, and it’s just a larger yoga event, it’s a longer class. [The event is] open to anyone at FIU and the community in general, as a ‘bring-a-friend’ kind of event, whereas our typical yoga classes are just for members,” said Holtzman.

This event will not only allow students to practice a stress relieving exercise like yoga for the first time, but also teach them about some proper post-workout food choices, like yogurt.

“The first year we were sponsored by Dannon, and this year Siggis Dairy is sponsoring us to give us free yogurt. I believe that Nestle [Nesquik] will be there as well. Chocolate milk is a good post-exercise recovery drink,” says Holtzman.

Holtzman says that everyone who participates will be given free yogurt after the yoga so students will have to register

**SEE UNWIND, PAGE 6**

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# Actress is ‘the queen of barrier breaking’

## LAVERNE, PAGE 4

raised in her hometown of Mobile, Alabama. Cox also talked about being bullied throughout her entire school

“When I moved to New York City I met real-life transgender people, I got to know them as people. Literally all the misconceptions of who transgender people were melted away

Laverne Cox  
Actress  
*‘Orange Is the New Black’*

career, being called “too feminine,” and the F-word, an offensive term that in the LGBTQ community.

In New York City, Cox had her a-ha moment where she finally understood and accepted herself and made the transition to become a woman.

“I didn’t associate being transgender with being successful. When I moved to New York City I met real-life transgender people, I got to know them as people. Literally all the misconceptions of who

transgender people were melted away. I was able to accept them and ultimately myself,” Cox told the audience.

Macielle Betances, a public relations major, was touched by Laverne’s message of love, the importance of self-love and how it can go a long way to happiness.

“We have to move from a shaming society to an empathetic society. A society who has a need to learn about people who are different from what someone may be considered ‘normal’ and has the capability to be empathetic,”

Nicholas Almeida, a digital media student had an eye-opening experience to the issues that face the transgender community after attending the lecture.

“I learned about unconditional love. I learned to appreciate a person for who they are and not what they look like.”

Cox continues to spread the love nationwide using the hashtag #TransIsBeautiful and encourages everyone to use it to shine that light on the transgender community.

You can catch Cox reprise her role as Sophia in season 5 of “Orange Is the New Black” set to premiere on Netflix on June 9.

*Manic Mondays is a weekly music column that covers University events and topics that affect students.*

# Recharge a ‘positive’ experience

## UNWIND, PAGE 5

on the event page, recreation.fiu.edu, in order to give the WRC a better idea on how much to order.

“Yoga and Yogurt” will be held on April 20 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. in the WRC basketball court at MMC and participants will be expected to bring their own mats.

### “Recharge for Finals”

FIU SGA and the Healthy Living Program at MMC are working together as part of their “Recharge for Finals” initiative, which will last from April 17 to 20 in GL 220, and April 24 to 27 in the Graham Center, according to Camila Pham, Health Coordinator for the Healthy Living Program, in a statement given over email.

“Every year different university departments

collaborate with the Graham Center and SGA to be able to provide students with services to aid them study and be successful during the last two weeks of the semester,” said Pham.

This event will provide students with a myriad of services over the course of the two weeks including healthy snacks and therapeutic services from the HLP.

“Some of the most popular services that the Healthy Living Program provides for students include... aromatherapy blends, and 5 minute massages from our massage therapist,” said Pham.

Although the weeks preceding finals are often a blur of students rushing around and attempting to study, Pham says that students should try to take at least ten minutes of their time to relax during the “Recharge” event because more often than not, “Recharge” is a very positive experience.

# SGA reveals term plans

## SGA, PAGE 1

create these unforgettable experiences with different people on campus.”

Schmidt’s platform includes more tabling events that will help meet the needs and concerns of students by helping them out on a one-to-one basis. At a forum discussion lead by President Rosenberg, Schmidt realized just how unaware students were of the resources available to them through the University. A student there had complained not being able to attend a Career Fair because he did not have the appropriate attire.

“What this student didn’t know though was that the Career Closet provides students who cannot afford new business attire with lightly used ones,” said Schmidt. “Resources are out there and I wish students knew they

were welcome to pass by the office and ask directly what it is that they need so I can direct them to the appropriate office. Students need to know who we are, what it is that we do, and what we can do to help them.”

Schmidt and Marseille will also work in improving the freshman experience for incoming students.

“We were both peer mentors and we see a lot of potential in that program because when we did it as freshmen, no one really liked to sit through that class and most students just see it as a class they are mandated to complete,” said Schmidt.

Schmidt said one way to improve the first year class is by making it more interactive and engaging for students. With such improvements in place, students would know how to use their advisors more wisely, preventing them from prolonging their graduation date as well as from taking the wrong classes, according to Schmidt.



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## AMERICAN SOCCER

# Miami FC team drops home opener

**ALEX TOLEDO**  
Staff Writer

The New York Cosmos came to town and spoiled Miami FC's home opener at the newly-named Riccardo Silva Stadium on March 8, winning the rematch 2-0.

Miami FC's record now stands at 1-1-1 through the first three games, still with 4 points on the season, tied with the Cosmos and the San Francisco Deltas for second-most behind the Jacksonville Armada FC.

Miami FC had plenty of opportunities from start to finish, holding possession of the ball for about 65 percent of the game and garnering a total of 22 shots while holding the Cosmos to just four total

shots. It still was not enough to win in the first game since the stadium was renamed after the team's president, with over 9000 people showing up.

The team started with a Hunter Freeman shot attempt off a Dylan Mares inbounds pass that was saved by Cosmos goalie Jimmy Maurer within the first two minutes. From there, the team took eight other shots in the remainder of the first half, consisting of attempts from Calvin Rezende, Freeman, Kwadwo Poku and Stefano Pinho while the Cosmos had a single shot attempt in the first half.

In the second half, the Miami FC took six more shot attempts before midfielder Daniel Szetela of the Cosmos scored the first goal of the

game in the 57th minute off a cross from right back Ryan Richter.

After four minutes were added after the 90-minute mark, Cosmos left back Ayoze Garcia hit a penalty goal in the 91st minute to seal the game.

Miami FC displayed an impressive passing game, converting 88 percent of their passes despite dishing out 244 more passes than the Cosmos. Miami FC also had 17 more successful crosses than the Cosmos.

The next time Miami FC will hit the field is on Saturday, April 22 at 7:30 p.m. when they will honor Venezuelan Heritage Day while facing the North Carolina FC.



NICHOLAS POBLETE/PANTHER PRESS

New York Cosmos going in for a goal against Miami FC.

## TRACK AND FIELD

## World rank 'still hasn't sunk in' for discus thrower

**STEVEN MELENDEZ**  
Contributing Writer



GABRIELLE RAINS

Making a good first impression isn't the easiest thing to do, but that is not the case for track and field standout Gabrielle Rains.

She began her collegiate career in Discus throwing by setting a career-best mark and school-record of 53.10m at the University Miami Hurricane Invitational in Coral Gables on March 19.

Rains is ranked 4th in the world among U-20 Discus throwers, and she said she's still in disbelief about her ranking.

"It's amazing. Honestly, it still hasn't sunk in," Rains said. "A friend of mine was telling me that I am at that level, but I still don't see myself there."

To top off her many accomplishments, Rains also set a new Canadian record surpassing the previous distance of 52.52m set by Michelle Brotherton on May 29, 1986, a record that was held for

31 years. She said she is definitely trying to show everyone she means business.

"There was a lot of build up all year to that moment, so I wanted to prove myself that the work I put in all year was going to pay off," Rains added. "I didn't want anyone to underestimate me and I wanted to show what I can do."

Gabrielle Rains also added she has a lot of goals that she wants to accomplish in her life. One goal includes defeating her idol, Sandra Petrovic from Croatia, a country northeast of Italy. Petrovic is one of the greater Discus throwers in the world.

"I really want to beat her," Rains said. "She's a lot older than me, but I really look up to her."

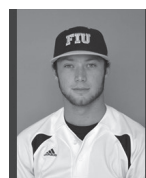
Rains has already performed in two international meets, and she said her motivation comes from the long-term goals she hopes to accomplish.

"That was the best time of my life and I really want to do that again," Rains said. "I keep searching for more big meets and looking at the standards that will get me there because it's the most fun I've ever had."

## BASEBALL

## Junior outfielder aides in team's success

**BRETT SHWEKY**  
Staff Writer



JACK SCHAAF

Mississippi State Bulldogs, outfielder Jack Schaaf increased the commanding lead for the Panthers as he sent an RBI single up the middle to drive home first baseman Nick Day for the 7-3 FIU lead.

The outfielder finished the first game of the two-game series going 2 for 3 with two singles and followed up with another solid performance in the final game, going 2 for 4 with another two singles.

The junior is currently batting a .244 average while also securing 13 runs, 10 hits and two home runs. Schaaf has been one of the best fielders for FIU as well, having a perfect 1.000 fielding percentage.

Schaaf said that the coaching staff has been one of the largest contributing factors in his success so far this season.

"Our coaches are doing a really great job with us," said the junior outfielder. "They're preaching to us 'trust in the process. Trust in the process.' As a team we might hear it a million times through practice and games and that helps the team and myself remain focused."

Head coach Mervyl Melendez said that Schaaf and the team have been working hard all season and that the team has been able to find a multitude of ways to win games.

"The guys have been battling and they've been working hard," said Melendez. "Sometimes as a coach you don't understand why we get in the predicaments we get into. However our guys fight back, they don't let slow starts derail them. It really shows the toughness of the team."

In his sophomore season, the outfielder was second on the team with 13 doubles and 36 runs scored. Schaaf also showed he can be a dangerous runner, stealing 9 bases out of the 11 attempts he had last season.

Before attending FIU, Schaaf played high school ball at Springboro High in Springboro, Ohio, where he batted a .506 average while having eight home runs. He received team MVP honors and was named all-state in baseball in 2014.

Schaaf was also a dual-threat quarterback in high school, where he was able to throw for 1,500 yards and run for over 1,200 yards. As the quarterback for the Springboro High Panthers, he helped lead the team to conference championships in 2013 and 2014.

The Panthers and Schaaf will return to the diamond on April 18, where the team will travel to Fort Myers to play against Florida Gulf Coast University. First pitch will be thrown at 6:30 p.m.

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## SPRING BALLING

Panthers pleased with their performance during spring scrimmage



JASMINE CASIMIR / PANTHER PRESS

Senior Quarterback Alex McGough hands the ball off during the University's team offense vs. defense game on April 7, 2017.

**PETER HOLLAND JR.**  
Staff Writer

After weeks of spring practices and adjusting to a new system under first year head coach Butch Davis and his coaching staff, the Panthers ended their 14th annual spring football scrimmage on a higher note from both sides of the ball.

Yet the offense, despite ending their last drive with an interception on the defense's territory, came up victorious with a final score of 17-14.

"FIU won. That's the best part. There is no losing situation," said Davis. "I was very pleased with the kids and the effort that they gave us tonight."

Senior quarterback Alex McGough didn't waste any time, searching for his primary target Thomas Owens. McGough connected to the senior receiver with a 73-yard pass for a touchdown

to give the offense their first lead of the night. McGough finished the night 14-21 for 202 yards and one touchdown. Owens finished the night with two catches for 81 yards.

"We [have] been here for four years and we've grown together," said McGough. "The chemistry between us is very good. I kind of know what he's thinking and he knows what I'm thinking. It's like we have that telepathy communication."

Running backs Anthony Jones and Napoleon Maxwell shared carries on offense. Senior running back Alex Gardner, FIU's all-time leading rusher sat out due to coach's decision. Jones scored on a 15-yard run where he bounced off inside to his left and dive in the end zone to for the offenses to be up 14-12. All three backs are looking to be the strength on the Panther's offense going

into this season.

"We [are] just trying to keep the running backs going and get in the rhythm," said Jones. We [are] just trying [to] read off the O-linemen and their doing a good job."

Defense was flying around making hits on the offense led by their returning defensive Fermin Silva, who recorded a game-high two sacks. Senior linebacker Anthony Wint and cornerback Andrew Brown led the defense in tackles. The game ended in an interception by junior defensive back Chris White, which gave the defense two extra-points to make it a 17-14 game.

"I feel like our defense did good but we still got to tackle better," said Silva. "I feel like we executed the play [and] the calls and we're just going to get back to the drawing board."

“

We [have] been here for four years and we've grown together. The chemistry between us is very good. I kind of know what he's thinking and he knows what I'm thinking. It's like we have that telepathy communication.

Alex McGough  
Senior Quarterback  
Football

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